



“DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...”

*Some Useful Video Marketing Tips*



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## How To Make Video Marketing Work For Your Business

*By Jennifer Lonoff Schiff*

*Brought to you by CIO*

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[http://www.cio.com/article/704621/How\\_to\\_Make\\_Video\\_Marketing\\_Work\\_for\\_Your\\_Business?page=3&taxonomyId=3056](http://www.cio.com/article/704621/How_to_Make_Video_Marketing_Work_for_Your_Business?page=3&taxonomyId=3056)

You've all seen—and envied—that viral video that gets millions of views seemingly overnight, the one everyone talks about for days. But does getting millions of views on YouTube translate into getting millions of dollars, or even thousands of dollars, in sales? And does adding video to your website or product pages really improve your search engine rankings and make people want to do business with you?

To find the answers to these questions, CIO.com interviewed dozens of video experts—from professional video makers and marketers to companies that have successfully used video to market their products or services—to find out who can benefit from video marketing and what it takes to successfully make and market a video.

### Who Needs Video?

If you sell a visual, hard-to-explain, or needs-to-be-seen product or service—"anything you can't test drive or try on," says Roger Vaughn, marketing and technology problem solver at Swift Marketing—having a video can make a huge difference.

Take, for example, BluScenes by Scenic Labs, a provider of ambient Blu-ray products (i.e., high-resolution videos of aquariums, fine art and fireplace scenes) for doctors' offices, wellness centers, spas and homes. "The first year we added video clips, our sales increased by about 400 percent," says Jason Rosenfeld, founder/producer, Scenic Labs, LLC. "They doubled again (in dollars) when we upgraded our videos to full-length HD versions."

In addition, since adding video to its product pages, Scenic Labs has seen a dramatic reduction in the number of returns—because customers know exactly what they are going to get.

And those BluScenes videos have not only benefited Scenic Labs, they've helped the company's partners. That's because "when partner sites include our videos, their sales typically double," says Rosenfeld.

ScanMyPhotos, a service that scans customers' photos, slides and negatives, is another good example of a service business that can benefit from video. "The best tool for explaining how to place orders and answer questions is video," says ScanMyPhotos CEO and President Mitch Goldstone. That's why the company features a number of how-to videos right on its home page, including this one on how to pack your photos for scanning with the ScanMyPhotos.com prepaid box.



To help you create a video that will get customers talking and clicking here are some helpful tips from the experts.

1. **Know who your target audience is.** "Think how your video can help your end user."
2. **Script it.** "A script for a video is like a blueprint when building a house," says Edward Schlesinger, script writer, OnlineVideoScriptwriting.com. "It will let you see what the finished product will look like before you start." In addition, "changes on paper are much easier and cheaper to do than once production starts."
3. **Have a clear call to action.** "What do you want people to do after they've watched your video?" asks Schlesinger. No matter how short your video is, "make it clear what you want people to do—pick up the phone, sign up online, walk through your doors. Don't throw away this opportunity to convert potential customers."
4. **Choose the right music.** "A widely ignored but great way to move the needle for brands through video marketing is to integrate music," says Bryan Boettger, chief creative officer at The Buddy Group, a digital engagement agency.
5. "By choosing the right music, brands have an opportunity to not only engage consumers, but they also come across surprisingly relevant if they break an artist who has yet to connect with a larger audience."
6. **Less is often more when it comes to effects.** "Building a story is the editor's number one objective," says Ciampa. "Stay away from snazzy effects and [focus on delivering] a professional and polished story."
7. **Keep it short.** Just remember that many (if not most) of the people you are trying to reach are at work and have short attention spans.
8. **Use your customers**—Satisfied customer quotes or testimonials are always a good feature to include and help validate your service or product.

**Use humor—if or where appropriate.** To advertise the fact that its food is fresh, not microwaved, Moe's Southwest Grill created an entertaining video titled "Microwaves Ruin Everything."

The video reached more than 1.5 million views on YouTube in only a few weeks, going viral faster than anyone anticipated. Soon after the video's release, sales jumped 8.5 percent. And while Moe's Southwest Grill cannot directly attribute that increase in sales to the video alone, the company believes it definitely contributed.

**You don't need to hire James Cameron.** While it's a good idea to work with a professional videographer or video production agency that knows what it's doing, if you don't have someone on staff, don't go overboard.

"Too many organizations feel compelled to produce Hollywood-grade corporate videos," says Ciampa. "Unless you're a luxury brand, most prospects not only don't care," they may be turned off by over-produced, overly slick videos. "Focus on great content and clear presentation.



**Include a video sitemap on your website.** "Ensure videos are indexed by Google by submitting a video sitemap," says Melody King, vice president of marketing for Treepodia, a provider of e-commerce video solutions. (Instructions for how to do this are available on Google's Webmaster Tools' page.)

## Why You Should Have YouTube Host Your Videos

Videos are meant to be shared. And the easiest way to share them is to post them on YouTube—and allow embedding. (YouTube, which is owned by Google, is also the number one place people go to watch videos, according to comScore, receiving more than twice as many visitors as its closest competitor, Yahoo, and can improve your site's Google ranking.)

Another advantage of having YouTube host your videos? "Unfortunately, not all sites can embed videos into their CMS [content management system]," says Rosenfeld. "That's partly why we switched over to YouTube to host our videos. If a partner cannot include our videos, they can link to our YouTube channel."

## Spread the Word—and the Link

Don't just keep your videos to yourself. "Use social media," says Goldstone. "Tweet, use Facebook and liberally post links to the videos everywhere," he advises. "Populate blog posts and other non-product content with videos, add them to marketing emails, and post them to social network sites to increase visibility and viewership," adds King.

## So Can Videos Increase Sales?

"Our research has shown that video is ten times more likely to generate a viewer response than traditional marketing collateral and web pages," says Ciampa. In addition, "our successful customers have seen their web traffic and conversions increase by 20 percent because of effective video marketing."

Similarly, studies conducted by Treepodia have shown that when people watch—and like—a product video, they're more likely to make a purchase. "The percentage increase varies from business to business, but a general ballpark is a 40- to 60-percent increase in the number of conversions," says King.

"Treepodia's own studies have shown that the mere presence of video, whether it's watched or not, can lead to sales increases," adds Kings, possibly due to the fact that Google includes video in its ranking algorithm, so a page with a product video has an increased chance of appearing higher in Google search results.



All that said, keep in mind that a million hits on YouTube will most likely not translate into a million dollars in sales. "Video isn't a magic bullet," says Scott Bell, owner of Seattle-based Media & Design. "It is another way to showcase your product and yourself. The best way for it to lead to sales is to have fun with it—don't have a normal [i.e., boring] business video."

Provide information that is valuable or helpful to customers and "do so in a unique and interesting way." If you do that, customers will want to know more about your products or services or brand and, if they like what they see, be more likely to purchase from you.



A Few Ways Video Can Be Used To Maximize Efficiency



*Brought to you by Done In 60*

The widespread use of broadband has generated a lot of excitement about online video. Have you taken a second to think about what makes your website engaging and interesting to your intended audience?

Imagine what you could do with a video on the home page of your website, in your newsletter, email or social media. You can introduce your site and business... Draw attention to specific sales or promotions... you can use video as an engaging instructional aid to help describe a complex process or concept.

Done In Sixty Seconds was started with the goal of making web video design efficient, economical, and effective. Using our new technology, anyone can design an entirely customized video on our website. We let you choose from a variety of professional actors to find someone to match your message. You pick their wardrobe and speaking style, as well as the video's background and soundtrack. You can even upload images to customize the video with pictures of your business. You can enter in text that you would like to appear on the video, such as phone number, e-mail, or address. The entire process is amazingly simple and fast.

Below is information on the many, many types of applications videos can be used for.

Announce a sale | Give directions | Announce drink | Specials | Describe your Business |

Explain an idea | Publicize | Promotions | Broadcast specific | Details | Guide visitors

Make a donation | Emergency Alert | Policy Changes | Food Specials | Drink Specials

Entertainment | News | Location Directions | Party Tips | How-to-do | Instructional

Vision impaired | Announce Recalls | Reminders | General Greeting | Thank You

Welcome | Don't Miss This | Promote a cause | Promote a Foundation | Deliver a message

Show your product | Display examples of a service | Slide Show | Simple Text with music

Simple Text with VO | Show your place of business | Trade Show Presentation

Shareholder News Updates | Video Business Cards | Weekly Promotions | Monthly

Promotions | Product Recalls | Mobile Messaging | Trade Show Giveaways | Your own

Personal spokes-model | Website tutorials | Online Training | CEU Courses | HR Tool

## 5 Must-do Tips to Spring Clean Your Marketing



By Jami Schneider

Brought to you by Business2Community

1. **Clean-Up Your Website:** How current is your website? Your website needs ongoing updates so it is consistently optimized for inbound marketing and lead capture. There may be old banner messages or coupons lingering on your site. Freshen it up with new offers and update main messaging in the banner areas of the website to match your current campaigns or promotions. Most importantly, create clear calls-to-action and landing pages for new pieces of advanced content. Here are a few ways to get your website back into shape!
2. **Boost Your Use of Social Media:** If you are a small business owner, social media can be a very effective and inexpensive marketing tool. Spend some time getting to know Facebook, Twitter, Google + and LinkedIn and begin to engage with people on these social media platforms. If you are already active in the social media space, be sure to reexamine your strategy and make decisions based on what has worked and what has not. If social media automation works for you, great! If you feel that your posts are self-promotional, err on the side of educational posts, as opposed to promotional posts, and don't be too repetitive. You can start by spring cleaning your Twitter account!
3. **Create Fresh Advanced Content:** Start by thinking about which types of content will most appeal to your target audience. If you know that your target market responds to video marketing, make more videos. Keep in mind: It's important to incorporate multiple types of content into your strategy; include whitepapers, video, infographics and other types of downloadable content. This will not only keep your site engaging, but it provides opportunities to repurpose content.
4. **Ramp Up your Blogging:** If you can only do one thing, make it a goal to blog three times per week to help your website's SEO. Your website will be indexed more frequently by Google, as each post represents a new opportunity to rank for new keywords, and the valuable fresh content can increase your inbound links. The more blogs published means the likelihood of them being shared increases and your business itself will become more recognizable. Check out these real-life examples of the impact of blogging on a business.
5. **Search Yourself:** Do you know what people are saying about you? If not, you should. You need to be aware of what people are saying in order to improve. Do a Google search of your business and see what comes up. There may be reviews for your business out there that are good and bad. These reviews provide a great opportunity for customer engagement: If a customer says something positive about your product, be sure to thank them. If a customer dislikes your product, be sure to find out their pain point and offer a resolution. Use this information to create helpful content (whitepapers, blogs, and special offers) that help your potential customers!

Now is the perfect opportunity for a fresh start in marketing your business. Utilize the energy of Spring and get going! When you do, let us know what you are doing to Spring Clean your marketing!

## 50 Tips & Techniques To Build Your Subscribers List



*By Andre W. Klein  
Brought to you by Business2Community*

## **1. Relevant Content**

Research and write content that your market is interested in. In this way, not only will you keep your subscribers happy, you will also boost the amount of people who will recommend your newsletter to their friends. Research can be done by sending out an email asking your readers what they want to read.

## **2. Using Feedburner**

www.Feedburner.com allows readers to subscribe to your blog updates by email. So even if you have not started your own newsletter yet, you can still update your readers of new content on your blog via email.

## **3. Ad Swaps**

Ad swaps are exchanges of advertisements. By incorporating someone's advertisement into your mailing, they agree to do the same for you. Swap ads with people in the same industry or related non-competing industries. Use this technique every 2-3 weeks.

## **4. Subscription Boxes**

Subscription boxes can be added anywhere on a website. Integrate more subscription boxes so that more people can see the boxes and subscribe to your list.

## **5. Newsletter and ezines**

You can rely on RSS feeds to build your email list. However, a more effective way of building your list is to start a newsletter or ezine on appropriate topics that are popular, address a genuine need, or solve a problem.

## **6. Safelists networks**

Joining safelists networks will gain you access to a large group of individuals who may be interested in joining your list.

## **7. Bonus Or Gift**



Offer a bonus or gift to individuals who sign up for your newsletter or ezine. Freebies always attract people. A good bonus could be back issues of your newsletter.

## **8. Opt-in Form**

Add an opt-in form on your blog. If your content garners readers who come back to your website on a regular basis, they may decide to opt-in to your newsletter.

## **9. Viral Marketing**

Free viral Ebooks get passed around readers very quickly hence it is a great way to get new subscribers.

## **10. Newsletter or email frequency and consistency**

If you want to be trusted and credible, you need to ensure that you are consistent with your newsletter or email frequency. Delivery can be set weekly, monthly or less frequently.

## **11. Facebook fanpage**

Create a facebook fanpage and set up a profile with relevant information about your business. Add links to your list and freebies and also consider simple discounts, giveaways or coupons for your selected products when users “like” your facebook fanpage. <http://doubleyourlikes.com/>

## **12. Pop Up Windows**

Pop up windows are still effective to get subscribers, especially in niche markets. Exit popups works well because when someone leaves a page on your website they get a popup window asking them to subscribe to your newsletter.

## **13. Cross Promotion**

Get to know owners of other blogs or websites in your niche so that you can partner with them to do some cross promoting of products. You can promote their products in your mailings in exchange for promotion of your newsletter in theirs.

## **14. Banner advertising**

Banner advertising can help you in list building. Submit your banner to some banner networks and purchase a rotating banner slot on various sites.

## **15. Use Name Squeeze Pages**



A name squeeze page is a simple subscribe form that then leads them to either a free report or a sales letter.

## **16. Create videos**

Create video content to promote your site. For instance, creating a series of instructional videos and offering them as content for newsletter subscribers is a good way to pull in more sign ups to your list.

## **17. Buy Leads With Co-Registration**

This is about buying subscribers from a 3rd party service. Co-registration works this way: After completing a subscription form or upon leaving a website, visitors are invited to subscribe to one or more e-zines. If yours is listed among these and the site gets a substantial amount of traffic, you'll begin to receive a number of subscriptions.

## **18. Host teleseminars/webinars**

Teleseminars and webinars are conference calls you can conduct to discuss your area of expertise. For list building, during the call and at the end of the call, make explicit mentions for people to join your mailing list (and explain how it is even free to start with).

## **19. Write Free Articles**

Create a free e course and plug it into an autoresponder. After which, write an article and let the readers know there is this great E-course for free they can sign up for. Then, provide the autoresponder link and explain how to sign up.

## **20. Limit Promotional Content in Your Emails**

Once people opt in to your list, it is crucial for you to strike a good balance between genuine information that is valuable for your readers and information that promotes products or services. This is because it determines whether they will stay in your list or not. If you are always promoting, people will be pretty turned off and possibly unsubscribe to your list.

## **21. Joint ventures**

Create a working partnership with another business owner and arrange for some sort of exchange related to list building.

## **22. Social Media**



Identify which social media channels are best for targeting your desired audience and take steps to acquire new subscribers by engaging with prospective clients on those sites. Learn more about social media here: <http://www.thesocialnetworkingacademy.com/>

### **23. Use A Sales Letter To Get Subscribers**

Create a sales letter but at the end of it, instead of an order button, have a subscribe here button for people to sign up for your newsletter. **24. Crafting An Effective Call to Action**

Professionally design your sign-up form and place it above the fold of your website to achieve optimal results. You can also add a link to join your list towards the end of your articles or your author bio. This is known to improve conversions drastically.

### **25. Generate opt-ins through affiliate marketing**

Create a product that include links for readers to sign-up for your list. Get your affiliates to sell this product and offer them a nice commission. This becomes a win-win situation because while they make money, you'll get subscribers. Some internet marketers offer up to 100% commissions to affiliates so as to build a substantial list.

### **26. Using Mp3s To Get More Subscribers**

Conduct audio interviews with experts in your field and record it on mp3. Once you have these interviews, write to the publishers you've been in contact with and tell them that you have this great set of mp3's just completed and you want to offer them for free to their lists.

On your website include the download link to these mp3's and also put a subscribe form near them for your newsletter.

### **27. WordPress plugins**

Take advantage of plug-ins such as 'popup domination' to improve conversions in your list building efforts.

### **28. Pay for referrals**

You can purchase leads formally; or by seeking out webmasters who are willing to divert traffic to your site for a fee.

### **29. Your Newsletter Back Issues**



Allow people to read your back issues without having to sign up for your newsletter, this will show them what type of content you do write and will make them want to join.

### **30. Landing Page**

Optimise your landing page so that it will have a good chance of ranking well on search engines. Another traffic source is to promote your landing page on social media networks. As your landing gets more exposure, more people will visit your website and sign up to join your newsletter.

### **31. Make your landing page more personal**

Consider including a picture of yourself at the top right corner of your website. This has proven to increase conversions from 1-2% which also means that you will be able to receive twice as many subscribers in a given week.

### **32. Don't use free Autoresponder services**

These services are unreliable and can go down at anytime. What's more they are not professional looking and emails sent out through them may most likely be recognized as spam by email bots.

### **33. Split test landing pages**

Send identical traffic streams to different landing pages so that you can test which landing page generates a higher conversion rate; and can adopt that exclusively for your list building efforts.

### **34. Free Forum Posting**

Posting useful and valuable information on a forum thread related to your niche is a great way to not only get more subscribers for your newsletter but recognized as an expert in your field. Do take note of forum rules and abide by them religiously lest you get banned from participating.

### **35. Measure and Refine Your Results**

Using Google Analytics, set-up goals to track subscription rates. Other tools also include Google's website optimizer where you can run simple split tests to see what methods deliver the best results.

### **36. Create a squeeze page**

Build a squeeze page that specifically captures email addresses for your list.

### **37. Trade Ads With Other Publishers**



Contact and arrange with other publishers to place an ad in their newsletters and they do the same for you in return.

### **38. Launch Your own Product**

By launching your own product, you can promote and build a substantial list of subscribers. You can also choose to create email tutorials or launch free webinar training to help grow your list quickly. Another method is to launch a free membership website and offer resources such as guides podcasts or videos.

### **39. PPC**

Create a text ad in your Google Adwords account, select relevant keywords for it, and then pay only when someone clicks on your ad. Your ad will link directly to your website or squeeze page where a strong call-to-action will direct visitors to subscribe to your list.

### **40. Contest**

Get a group of publishers and run a contest together. Inform subscribers in your list that to enter this contest, they must subscribe to the other publishers lists and vice versa. Here's a simple contest software you could use: [www.contestburner.com](http://www.contestburner.com)

### **41. Article Recommendation**

Get together with 4 or 5 publishers and have them agree on running an article that you wrote. The article you write is about the best newsletters in your market, and these recommendations will of course be the newsletters of publishers you partner with. The article is to be objective like a news report.

### **42. Write a post or article to Promote Your List**

Write a post or article published to your website to announce the launch of your mailing list and highlight your newsletter benefits for subscribers. Take steps to promote it on search engines and social media to drive traffic to your site.

### **43. Free ebooks**

Provide subscribers with a free ebook after signing-up, they'll be much more likely to join.

### **44. Thank You For Subscribing Page**



Partner with a group of publishers and tell them you want to send new subscribers of your ezine to a page that recommends signing up for their ezine and that they do the same.

#### **45. Free reports**

This is similar to giving away free ebooks in exchange for subscription. A free report often targets a specific theme or is a write-up on a “how-to” topic.

#### **46. Buy Ezine Solo Ads**

Ezine solo ads are ads that are sent out by themselves, unlike classified and other ads that go out in the ezine itself. A compelling solo ad works wonders for your list building. Here's a directory of ezines: <http://www.directoryofezines.com>

#### **47. Add content to your site**

Add content to your site with a subscription form either in the margins, in the middle of the content, or in a pop-over. The more articles you have, the more value you add to readers, the more traffic you will generate, and the more opportunities you will have to generate subscriptions.

#### **48. Information Privacy**

Include a note below your opt-in form that explains that you will never sell subscriber information—and you will never spam people who join your list. This should help to increase your conversion rates.

#### **49. Press Releases**

Write press releases announcing the launch of your subscription free giveaway with both readers and search engines in mind and then submit it to press release websites. This helps get more exposure to your website and directs traffic which increases sign ups to your list.

#### **50. Teaser Posts**

Offer teaser content on your website on an interesting topic. Teaser posts help to increase the rate of sign ups because users are redirected to sign up to your list first in order to access the full content.

## **10 Surefire Ways to Get Your Company Found on the Web**



*By Pamela Springer  
Brought to you by Manta.com*

How do your customers find you? It seems like that should be a simple question to answer, but the reality is it can be tricky. Potential customers have more and more options to find the product or service they are looking for—and it's your job to make sure your business can be easily found.

**70% of consumers say  
online search is their preferred  
method for finding information  
about local businesses.**

A recent study by eMarketer compared how frequently people used search engines to find local businesses as opposed to using traditional methods such as yellow pages, print directories, store circulars, emailed coupons and newspapers. For all age groups under 55, consumers used search engines most often. For those under 35, search engines were used more than 50% of the time.

Obviously it is critical for small businesses to manage their online presence. The term Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is new to many small business owners, but understanding it can be the key to gaining new customers and increasing revenue. The concept might seem menacing to people not familiar with Internet marketing, but it really is quite simple when broken down into simple steps, which we do here.

By definition, SEO is the process of making a website as visible as possible in search engines. But SEO is important even if your business does not have a website. That's because your company is still listed on the Internet in various directories. You want those listings to be found because they can draw in new customers.

And "new customers" is the name of the game. SEO is not about someone typing your company name into Google, Yahoo or Bing and your website or directory listing popping up. The goal of SEO is to be found by people who DON'T know about your business. For example, if your business is Green Thumb Landscaping, you want your business to show up if someone searches for "green thumb," "landscaping services" or "new paver patio." It's also important to be found for localized searches such as "green thumb Columbus OH" and "new paver patio Columbus OH." SEO can help you do that.

As consumers become more Internet savvy, it's imperative that businesses take ownership of their Internet presence and manage it. Your company can show up in various places on the Internet without your knowledge through public records, directory listings, personal blogs, etc.



No matter who put your company information out there, you should take it as an opportunity to increase awareness of your company. Following are 10 steps you can take to do just that.

### 1. Do an online search for your company.

Your first step is to understand where your company information is on the Internet and to take ownership of it. Search for your company name in any search engine. Be sure to search for common misspellings of your company name and possible abbreviations. Once you find the listings, check them for accuracy and completeness. Most directories allow and encourage business owners to “claim” or “own” your business listings online. Take advantage of those offers and update your information periodically, so it remains current and accurate. You should be in control of how your company is represented online, just as you do in your other marketing activities.

### 2. Remember to NAP.

The most important information you put online can be abbreviated as NAP:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number

If you want to be found, you must have this information listed and it must be consistent in every occurrence. The spelling, abbreviations, formatting, and phone number must be exactly the same in every listing. Search engines look for clusters of reference information that are consistent. So the more consistent your information, the more easily your company will be found.

Here are some examples of inconsistencies:

- (724) 555-1212 is not the same as 724.555.1212
- Road is not the same as Rd.
- CA is not the same as California or Calif.
- Pine Grove Drive is not the same as Pinegrove Drive

When displaying your address, make sure to paste it into a map website to make sure the correct address is displayed. This is exactly what your customers will do and if the mapping websites cannot locate your address, you will lose customers. In terms of contact information, local phone numbers (as opposed to 800 numbers) should be used whenever possible as they are important for local searches. Also avoid using call tracking numbers. Email addresses should use your business domain. For example, if your website is [www.windowsforless.com](http://www.windowsforless.com), then your email address should be [janedoe@windowsforless.com](mailto:janedoe@windowsforless.com). This practice is simple to set up but very important because it validates you as a professional. Although these tips may seem very elementary, they can make a big difference in optimizing search engine results.



Think of search engines as young children. They have some intelligence, but they still need to be guided. So the clearer you can make the instructions, the easier it is for them to understand, and the easier it will be to find your business online.

### **3. Know your business' vocabulary.**

Search engines look for common words when matching websites up to searches. So understanding what words or terms your customers use when they talk about you or your product or service is a critical component of SEO. That's because these are likely the words they will enter into the search engine to find products and services.

Most business owners have an idea of how their customers talk about their products and services, but how do you know if the information is right? There are several free online tools that will provide you with statistics on what words or terms people most often use when searching certain topics. For example, an animal hospital might offer day care services for pets. In order to understand what customers are searching for, you can use the Google Adwords Keyword Tool (<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>) to search "doggy daycare" and find similar words and phrases and their frequency of use. In this case, you'd find that a significantly larger audience searches for "doggie daycare" vs. "doggy daycare."

Once you know what words and terms are common in your line of business, use them on your website, especially on your "About" page. Search engines will look for those terms and match them up to what people are searching for.

### **4. Don't try keyword stuffing.**

"Keyword stuffing" is entering keywords or terms associated with your business in the company name field, such as "Smith Dental Care – Whitest Teeth in Smithville," or overly repeating those words in descriptions in an effort to get more visibility. Not only does this break the consistency rule described in Tip 2, it looks very unprofessional to prospective clients. It might even lower your website's ranking in search engines if it is attempted. Overall, this strategy is flawed, amateurish and likely to backfire.

### **5. Optimize your website.**

There is value in partnering with someone who understands SEO. But if you choose to do it yourself, there are several tips that will help you maximize your investment on your website. The way to do that is to get people to visit it. One way to direct people to your website is to build links to it. There are many ways to do this. You can do it through social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), advertising, vendor/partner/customer web pages, online directories, or through newspaper or magazine articles written about your company or industry. The other way to drive visitors is through the design of your website. Be sure to put your company name on your homepage. It may sound obvious, but there are many sites that overlook this simple rule and are not being found by search engines. Along the same lines, include some of the keywords and terms you researched in Tip 3. Test this by searching for those words on your favorite search engine.

Does your website show up? Also include your city, state, ZIP code and local phone number on



the website. This will help with local searches. Once people arrive on your site, make them feel comfortable, so they'll come back. When writing the content, put yourself in your customers' shoes, or better yet, talk to one or two. Learn how to speak their language and write the text for the website like you are talking to them directly. Think about how your words would make them feel and make sure you create a positive atmosphere. For example, if your product is complex, simplify it in an effort to not belittle them with your intelligence. If the service is embarrassing, have tact when discussing the problem and make them feel like they are not alone.

#### **6. If you invest in an SEO provider, shop around.**

When selecting an SEO provider, you'll find there are a lot of them, but not all offer the same services nor provide the same results. Look for an SEO expert who fits your business model (maybe with a focus on small business or in your industry). Be sure you understand what services they will provide and what results you should expect. A good SEO company will be able to provide references and explain all of the work they do once engaged. One key thing to understand is that you should not expect immediate results. SEO is a process that builds upon itself and can take time to show value. If someone promises you immediate results or guaranteed rankings, be concerned.

#### **7. Look at your competition.**

Look up your competition online. Start with the search engine. What are the results when you search their name? Their location? What words and terms are they using? Are they effective? Look them up on online directories. Are their profiles more comprehensive than yours? If you were a shopper and you came upon their profile and your profile, which looks more impressive? Why?

**Take in all you learn from  
the competition and apply  
it to your web strategy.**

#### **8. Set up Google Alerts for your company.**

Google offers a free service called Google Alerts that automatically emails you when it finds new results for topics that match your search terms. It alerts you when it finds your specified keywords in web pages, articles, blogs, etc. Google Alerts help you find mentions about your business. This gives you the opportunity to reach out to whoever wrote the content and ask them for a link back to your website or Manta profile. You also can use Google Alerts to respond to both positive and negative reviews online.

- 83% of small business plan to use social media channels.
- 40% felt creating a profile on a social network was the most effective ad/ marketing channel.



- 58% of small business that offered daily deals (such as Groupon) found it effective for customer acquisition.
- 77% of those small businesses would offer a daily deal again.

#### 9. Consider social media.

Because the world is moving online, conversations are taking place about you whether you are aware of it or not. And much of that chatter is happening on social networking sites. The advantage of joining in is that you can engage and connect with your target audience while listening to what they are saying about you. This can be done through traditional sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc. or through blogs and forums that you author or participate in. The marketing intelligence website eMarketer predicts that \$3.1 billion will be spent on social network advertising in 2011 and almost \$4 billion in 2012.

Most small businesses get involved through indirect advertising activities, such as creating “groups” or “pages” that users can choose to join. Facebook is a popular choice. The business then uses various tactics to build “subscribers” or “likes” of their page or group and uses it to market contests, new products or simply to build brand awareness.

Before deciding to jump on the social media bandwagon, you must determine if it is a good fit for your business. Here are two considerations:

- The demographics of your customers:  
Is your audience on social networks?
- Social network management: Do you have the time and ability to create the content required and to participate in the conversations?

On average, a small business spends an hour each day initially to do research, set up pages/groups, blog, have conversations, respond to inquiries, etc. To figure out if your demographics fit those of social networkers, let’s use Facebook as a measuring stick. According to a Social Network Analysis Report published by Ignite Social Media, about 60% of users are women. Almost 75% are between the ages of 25 and 54 with an income ranging from \$25,000 to \$75,000, and well over 50% have at least some college education. MySpace and Twitter show similar statistics.

#### 10. Be responsive, get positive reviews and referrals.

As your traffic grows on your website, you want those visitors to be pleased with their experience. That means that if you get an email or inquiry from a prospect, respond to it as quickly as possible. This immediate attention will show that your company is responsive, cares about its customers and is progressive in its use of technology. This practice will not only satisfy that potential customer but will hopefully lead to referrals.

If those prospects become clients, list them on your website as customer success stories and ask them to give a review or referral. Some 70% of Americans say they consult product reviews or consumer ratings before making a purchase, according to an October 2008 survey by Penn



Schoen Berland, a research and consulting firm. Reviews give you the ability to turn success into more success.



### 3 Tips on Attracting & Engaging Customers with Web Content Optimization



*Brought to you by Wisdek Corp.*

Those who have done Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and PPC Management campaigns understand the importance of content optimization. Well written content must engage the reader, increase search engine rankings and traffic and promote the prospect of quality links from other websites. Here are 3 important tips all website owners need to know in order to accurately complete content optimization.

**Tip # 1: Engage the Reader:**

SEO is often criticized for focusing too much on keyword research and the location of keywords in the text. Proper keyword research and proper keyword placement may help websites rank well, but it may not engage the reader enough to persuade him/her to become a customer. We thus recommend that all businesses not only entertain, but enlighten and entice the readers as well.

**Tip # 2: Utilize Bullet Points:**

Utilizing bullet points is one of the most crucial elements of content optimization. Thicker content and chunky paragraphs will not assist businesses in persuading website visitors to buy their products or request their services.

**Tip # 3: Fast & Simple:**

This is the most important tip we can provide to all of our customers and readers. It is important to make loading time faster and to make navigation simple. It is equally vital to remember to make pertinent information succinct and immediately available. Consumers will not buy if it is difficult to do so.

## 7 Simple Steps to Writing for Reading on Camera

*By Rick Dearborn*

*Brought to you by Business2Community*

*See Full Article at:*



<http://www.business2community.com/marketing/video-marketing-seven-simple-steps-to-writing-for-reading-on-camera-0163793>

Most marketers are already good writers. They're involved in carefully choosing words and crafting marketing messages all day long. But writing a script to be read on camera is a whole different experience that requires a few new skills. Here are a few useful tips that will help you create scripts that are easier to read aloud:

**1. READ IT ALOUD.** No matter what you've written, read it out loud to yourself. See how it flows and feels, and make changes accordingly. Then put it down for a while, and do it again. You will be surprised at the edits that will be needed.

**2. CONTRACTIONS.** When writing we rarely use contractions, but they're commonplace in our speech. When writing to be read aloud, contractions are essential. After you write your script, read it over and look for places where contractions make sense. Here is an example that shows what a difference contractions can make:

**Before:** "Now you are ready to get started. We are sure you already know there is a best way to begin. But, if you do not, here is how you can start. You will need to write a draft first and you will need to read it aloud. It is always a good idea to start that way."

**After:** "Now you're ready to get started. We're sure you already know there's a best way to begin. But, if you don't, here's how you can start. You'll need to write a draft first, and you'll need to read it aloud. It's always a good idea to start that way."

**3. COMMAS.** Commas make good grammatical sense, but in most cases they don't work well when reading aloud. The reason is, when we read aloud we feel we need to pause when we see a comma. The grammatical use of a comma does not necessarily result in the best phrasing when reading aloud. After you write your script, take all the commas out and read it aloud. Where it feels natural to pause, put dashes in instead of commas. Then read aloud again and adjust as necessary.

**4. UNDERLINING.** If there are particular words you need to emphasize when reading aloud, underline them. But, don't go crazy with it. Use underlining sparingly, only on the words that are really important. Some techniques recommend single, double, and triple underlining of words all through your script to ensure different levels of emphasis. If you go crazy with underlining, your reading can sound mechanical. It should be natural and real. I recommend using underlining only for the words that really matter.

**5. PARAGRAPH PHRASING.** Don't hesitate to break your script up into smaller, shorter paragraphs – it will help you phrase the concepts when reading aloud. It's ok to even make a paragraph out of a single sentence.

**6. FONT SIZE AND LINE SPACING.** It really helps to write the script in a larger than usual font, one that is easy to read aloud. I also recommend greater than normal line spacing. I like

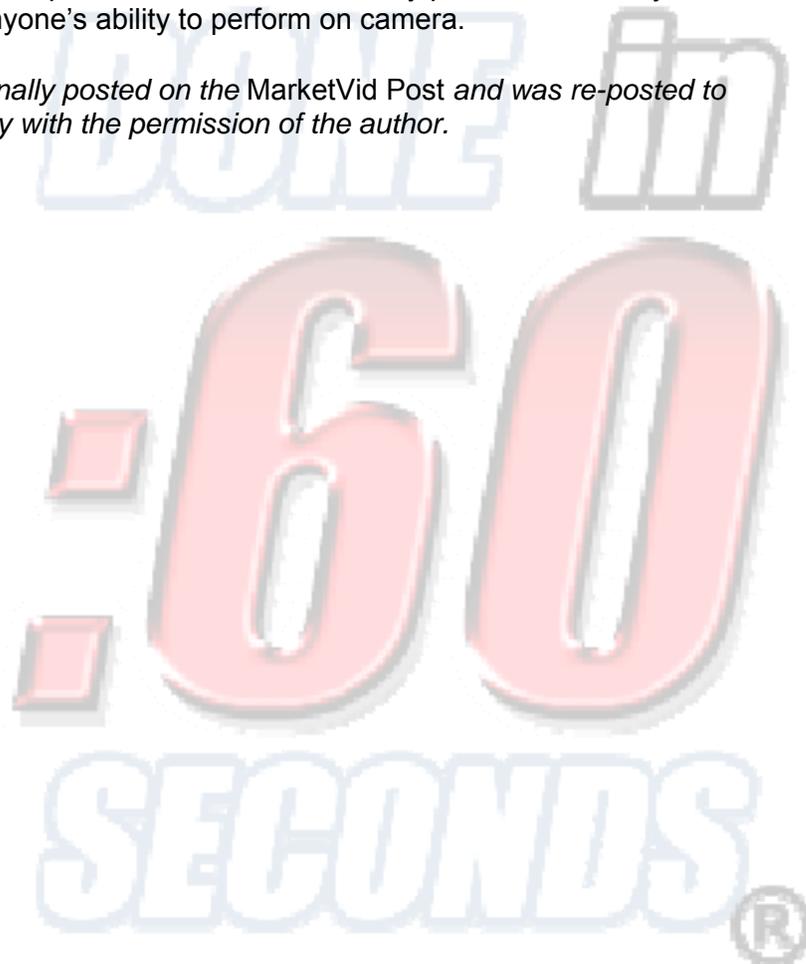


24 point Arial font, with 1.5 to 2.0 line spacing. That gives you a little space to enter hand written underlining or other small changes. (But, don't get too carried away with hand written edits on your script. They can get hard to read. It's always better to make them in the computer and print out a new copy, if you can).

**7. ALL CAPS.** When you write a script in ALL CAPS, you can focus more on the emphasis of the meaning, rather than structural emphasis. And, it's just easier to read aloud.

Variations of the seven tips above have been used by professionals for years. Incorporating them will enhance anyone's ability to perform on camera.

*This article was originally posted on the MarketVid Post and was re-posted to Business2Community with the permission of the author.*





## Social Video ROI – Does It Really Matter?

By Grant Crowell

Brought to you by Video Commerce.org

See Full Article at:

<http://video-commerce.org/2012/04/social-video-roi-does-it-really-matter/>

Measuring social video ROI can be a daunting challenge for retailers today. In fact, ROI can be often overlooked in social video initiatives when marketers choose to focus on the less tangible goal of customer relationship building. In this article, I review the reasons why social video ROI measurement is a critical element to the success of your social video program.

### Coming of age: Social video initiatives realizing ROI expectations

Social Video ROI has come into prevalence now. I base that claim off of two key survey results from Social Media Examiner's *2012 Social Media Marketing Industry Report*:

**Video marketing holds the top spot for future plans:** A significant 76% of marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube and video marketing, making it the top area marketers will invest in for 2012.

**ROI has become a top-priority.** The number-one question marketers want answered is how to track the ROI of social media. (It can be presumed that ROI expectation applies just as much to video as any other media or social channel, if not more so.)

### The overlooked challenges with measuring the ROI of social video

One of the most overlooked challenges with measuring the ROI of social video is how to align the engagement data provided by social video KPIs with the real-world economic objectives of **sustainability and profitability**. The problem is that too many marketers involved in social video simply ignore these objectives. They think that being a part of the community and engaging with others online is enough. They are quick to dismiss the benefits of having the qualifiable and quantifiable outcomes that ROI can provide.

One notable thought leader in the social video arena that I talked with recently about this issue is Kevin Nalty. Kevin is a popular YouTube Partner and author of *Beyond Viral: How to Attract Customers, Promote Your Brand, and Make Money with Online Video*. Kevin stressed to me that while he believes it's true that ROI's connotation has evolved, he thinks **social video still has to meet the traditional standard of ROI for it to be a sustainable business practice** – no matter what the size of the enterprise may be:



“On the ROI front, the technical difference between “return on investment” is usually a quantified financial return (the revenue divided by the cost). So the statement that if it “better our lives, it has ROI” doesn’t quite make sense to me as a business guy. For instance as a marketer, I can create a lot of entertaining or educating web content to support my target customers. But that’s not directly tied to revenue... it’s goodwill or indirect marketing. Hopefully that content does help people, but if that was my only goal then I would not likely succeed measuring it from an ROI perspective.”

Kevin also stressed that for people who work in mid-to-large size enterprises, **measuring ROI by standards that all departments can agree on** can also be especially challenging.

“My initial thought/concern is that these various pieces are often executed (at least with larger companies) by different departments that measure success quite differently.” says Kevin. “As an example, I’m guessing most PR folks (who often engage in the “top-of-funnel” activities) don’t know or care about CRM.”

Kevin also explains that the biggest and most challenging ROI opportunity he has found with social video is that it allows itself to be well-integrated into both top-funnel activities (such as marketing and PR with reach and awareness), and also mid-to-end funnel activities (such as customer service and sales). The main challenge is that a single social video initiative for a larger enterprise can require different measurements of business success based on which departments you need to get “buy-in” from.

## Social video ROI doesn’t end with the sale

Lee Odden, social media expert and CEO of TopRankMarketing, recently shared with me his view on social video ROI. He thought that in order to realize the true value of social video ROI, it needs to be measured not only across the buying cycle, but also **across a customer’s entire lifecycle**. This includes monetary purchases with a hard economic value, and also activities that lend themselves to those things over time through relationship building — including consumer advocacy, contributions, and collaborations with others.

## Conclusion: It’s time to get serious with measuring ROI in your social video

As “social” becomes more essential to business activity, ROI becomes even more essential to make your social video initiatives sustainable and profitable. It’s fine for some organizations to experiment with social video at first without measuring the hard benefits, but you always need to be thinking about relevant business outcomes. “Social” helps you build customer relationships, but ultimately it’s the ROI that gives your social video program the focus it needs to achieve success.